

STATEMENT

—*Secretariat of the National Council,
March 13, 1964*

The English weekly **CURRENT** of Bombay in its issue of 7th March, 1964, has published a story that it has got hold of a bunch of letters alleged to have been written by Comrades S. A. Dange and Nalini Gupta, after their conviction to four years' imprisonment in the year 1924 in the Kanpur Bolshevick Conspiracy Case. The **CURRENT** says that the alleged letters were found by some research scholars who went to the National Archives of the Government of India.

On enquiry, the Secretariat has found that typed copies of these letters are being surreptitiously circulated by some people, obviously with a view to attack the character of the Chairman of the Communist Party of India, spread vile slanders against him in order to disrupt the Communist Party and the mass movement led by it.

These vile fabrications have been produced with all the paraphernalia of so-called genuineness. They were very conveniently "discovered" in the National Archives, where the Home Department files were made available for "research" in the history of the Communist Party. It is even said that the Home Department obligingly allowed copies of the document to be made and taken out in the interest of "historical truth".

The real truth is that no such letters were ever written.

The contents of these fabrications, apart from an innocuous one relating to a request for transfer from one jail to another, purport to show Comrade Dange as offering his services to the then British Government in exchange for his release from prison. In short, the slanderous suggestion is

being circulated that the Chairman of the Communist Party was given his release on the undertaking to become a British agent.

There have been instances of astounding forgeries in history done by the ruling classes to destroy their enemies. The Communist and labour movements of the whole world have been victims of such vile attacks of slander and character assassination of leading personalities. This one against one of the most popular veterans of the labour and Communist movement in our country is of the same kind.

We cannot say when these alleged letters were forged, and if they have been planted in the Archives, when and by whom. It is a fact that just in this very period, when the Kanpur case was launched against the Indian Communists, the British Tory Government was using all its vile apparatus to malign the Soviet Government, the Communist Party and all the progressive forces who supported them. The case itself was launched at the instance of the Tory reactionaries in order to prevent the recognition of the Soviet Government for which the British people were pressing. The case was intended to show that the Soviet Government and the Communist International were trying to overthrow the British Government through its "agents" and hence it was wrong to have any relations with it.

When the Labour Government was installed in England in 1924, the Foreign Office manned by Lord Curzon's stooges forged the well-known "Zinoviev Letter" which led to the overthrow of the Labour Ministry and its defeat in the elections. Even the other day, George Brown, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, complained that the Tory lie factory of "forgeries beginning with the Zinoviev letter of 1924 and the Gestapo smear of 1945" is continuing to work even today.

The timing of the publication of these forgeries shows that a very deep game is being played by various forces against the Party and the masses.

Vile slander of this kind was first spread by the Chinese leadership through the Peking Radio that the Indian Party is a Dange clique and has become the agent of the Government in getting people arrested.

Certain disruptors who support and circulate this Chinese lie against our Party have joined hands with certain reactionaries in India in alliance with Anglo-American intelligence agents to explode this slanderous time-bomb against the Party as a whole and Comrade Dange personally. It is meant to weaken and destroy those forces who are defending the people's interests and organising the greatest movement of the masses today under the leadership of the Party with Comrade Dange as Chairman. It is a clever move to kill several birds with one stone.

These forgeries thus serve the game of all reactionary and disruptive forces, each one with its own special interest to serve, and all of whom together are trying to destroy the Party and the mass movement led by it.

The slander-mongers of the CURRENT and those who help it have tried to suggest that Comrade Dange secured his release before the expiry of the term of imprisonment. This is another lie. The facts on record are as follows: four accused were sentenced in the Kanpur Case in 1924 May—Comrades Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad, Usmani and Nalini Gupta. Out of them, both Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmad alone were released prematurely, that is in 1925, on grounds of illness. Comrades Dange and Comrades Usmani served their sentences in full, deducting the usual remission that is earned under jail rules and were released in 1927.

The subsequent history of Comrade Dange and his various imprisonments in the cause of the Party and the working class completely belie all the insinuations made by

these forgeries of the reactionary forces. After Kanpur, Comrade Dange served seven years in the Meerut case. There also, he along with Muzaffar Ahmad and Usmani got specially larger sentences than the others as these three were declared to be "habitual conspirators" from the Kanpur Case. Muzaffar Ahmad was given larger sentence because he had not served full term in the Kanpur case. Comrade Dange was arrested on the outbreak of the war in 1939, convicted for publishing anti-war pamphlets and then detained in the Deoli Camp, altogether for four years. Though the Party had been legalised in 1941 and other Communist detenus had been freed, Comrade Dange continued to be detained and was released only in 1943. He has so far spent about 17 years in prison since 1924, of them nearly 14 years under the British Government and the rest under the Congress Government.

Whatever the slandermongers may do, the toiling masses of India will not forget this record of sacrifices, years of imprisonments suffered in the struggle against the British imperialists and now the rule of the monopolists in free India. Those who are trying to use these forgeries, whosoever made them or planted them, are only serving the interests of the imperialists and the reactionaries. And those who are trying to use them in the ideological or political organizational controversies inside the Party are only becoming the handmaids of reaction with a view to disrupt and split the Party and smash the mass movement. The slanderous attack on Comrade Dange as Chairman of the Party and one of the most popular, respected old leaders of the Party and the working class, serves the far-reaching aims of reaction on a national and international scale.

All decent-minded people, the whole Party, must combat and repulse this sinister and vile manoeuvre.